

Recycling and Waste Reduction News

Fall Issue 2004

www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling

What's in YOUR Blue Bin?

What do plastic bags, a lawn mower blade, auto parts, a garbage disposal, an extension cord, plastic toys, and a Styrofoam cup have in common? **None of them belong in your recycling bin**. All of the above items were put in residents' recycling bins and delivered to the County Materials Recycling Facility (MRF), where they had to be sorted out and sent to disposal.



Waste from MRF.

The County recently completed a waste study at the MRF in an effort to reduce costs and increase efficiency. The study determined that the largest category of waste is non-recyclable paper such as beverage cartons and cereal and juice boxes that people mistakenly put into their recycling bins. Companies that buy the corrugated cardboard, newspapers, magazines, and office paper do not want these types of boxes called "chipboard". Even though most people think of them as cardboard, they are very different from the heavier, recyclable corrugated cardboard used for shipping products. Chipboard is a very low grade of paper that has already been recycled several times. The fibers are very short and no longer valuable for recycling.

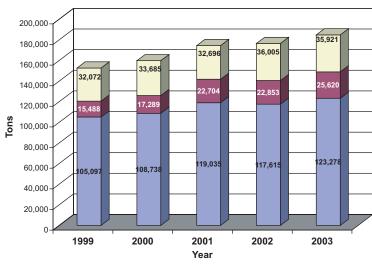
Plastic bags are a different problem. They are a hazard to the blowers and conveyors (sorting equipment) in the MRF, causing them to plug up and stop running. Another hazard is electrical cords, including

extension cords and Christmas tree lights, all of which can wrap around conveyors and cause serious damage to the equipment. Scrap metal can jam equipment and cause worker injuries when it drops onto sorting conveyors.

Many residents are very dedicated recyclers who want to recycle everything. Others may not understand the problem. It is important to **put only recyclables in your bin** - items that have markets (buyers) that will use the commodities in manufacturing new products. Putting non-recyclable items that should be thrown in the trash into your recycling bin increases costs and may damage equipment or cause injuries to sorters. Scrap metal should be put in designated containers at municipal drop off sites or taken to a local scrap dealer.

For a "virtual tour " of the recycling facility that shows the equipment, explains the sorting process, and shows where markets are located, visit the county recycling website at www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling. You can also print out a "Residential Recycling Guide". Thank you for helping to make recycling more efficient!

Waukesha County Recycling and Solid Waste 1999-2003 Tons collected from residential units – 37 municipalities



The chart shows that residential solid waste generation rates for the entire county have been stable over the past five years, from 69% in 1999 to 67% in 2003. Yard waste has increased from 10% in 1999 to 14% in 2003, while recycling has declined slightly from 21% in 1999 to 19% in 2003.

The five- year average is 68% solid waste landfilled, 12% yard waste collected and composted, and 20% paper and containers recycled.

□ Paper/containers recycled■ Yard waste composted■ Solid waste landfilled

Change in Household Hazwaste Collection for 2005

The county entered into a partnership with the Onyx Emerald Park Landfill Standing Committee in 2002 to provide coordinated household hazardous waste (HHW) collection service for the whole county, as well as the residents affected by the Muskego landfill. The goal is to provide convenient service for residents to properly dispose of household hazardous waste within the allotted budget.

Since both the county and committee budgets are fixed, some modifications need to be made to the 2005 program to stay within budget and increase cost efficiency. Residents' use for the past three years was studied to see where fixed costs could be reduced with minimal impact to service. **Winter hours will be reduced at Muskego and Waukesha, and the Ottawa special collection will be eliminated for next year.** There are still three year-round collection sites and five special one-day collection events in Brookfield, Delafield, Mukwonago, New Berlin, and Oconomowoc to serve residents.

2005 Permanent Site Hours Location/Hours Days Open 1st & 3rd Saturday from November-March Muskego Hours – 8 a.m.-noon Every Saturday (except holiday weekends) Waukesha **2nd Saturday** from December-March Hours – 8 a.m.-4 p.m. 2nd & 4th Saturday (except holidays) April-Nov. 3rd Wednesday from May-October 11 a.m.-7 p.m. **Menomonee Falls** Every Monday and Wednesday Hours - 11 a.m.-6 p.m. (except holidays) 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Every Saturday (except holiday weekends)

GETTING READY FOR WINTER?

STORE PAINT PRODUCTS PROPERLY

Consumers throw away thousands of dollars of household products each year way that are damaged by freezing.

Prevent paints, stains and driveway sealers from freezing.

For storage tips, visit the County Recycling website www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling

DO YOU RECYCLE AWAY FROM HOME?



According to a recent survey by Alcan, Inc., the world's largest aluminum recycler, used aluminum can recycling rates have fallen from highs of almost 70% in the early '90s to less than 50% in 2003—a record low. Yet, 70% of Americans say they recycle aluminum

Phone: 262-896-8300

cans always or often, according to Alcan's survey. Over half the recyclable aluminum generated in the United States, worth over \$800 million, ends up in landfills, according to the latest report.

"If we recycled every used aluminum can in the US, we would save an amount of energy equivalent to 30 million barrels of oil per year," says Kate Krebs, Executive Director of the National Recycling Coalition in Washington. "That's enough to run 82 million US households for 24 hours, cook 39 billion microwave dinners, or vacuum 1 billion homes for a year," she said.

While re-manufacturer demand for PET #1 plastic bottles is at an all-time high and single-serve bottle sales are going through the roof, the quantity of plastic bottles being littered, landfilled, or incinerated is climbing at an alarming rate. According to the World Watch Institute, less than a fifth of all plastic beverage bottles in the US are recycled, with 30 million discarded per day. Plastic bottles made from PET (polyethylene terephthalate) can be recycled into many products, including carpeting, plastic strapping, fleece jackets, sleeping bags, and beverage containers.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reports that Wisconsinites do a good job of recycling at home, but don't carry through when away. State estimates indicate close to \$20 million worth of beverage containers are thrown away in Wisconsin's public spaces yearly, rather than recycled. Owners and managers of many businesses and facilities are not providing recycling containers, despite state law and local ordinances, exacerbating the mounting throwaway problem.

Here are some simple tips to help recycle and reduce waste away from home:

- <u>Be Direct</u>—If recycling isn't available, inform the business manager or event organizer that it is desired, expected, and required by Wisconsin law.
- <u>Carry In/Out</u>—Keep a bag or container in the car to take items home to recycle.
- <u>Reduce</u>—Bring re-useable food and beverage containers whenever possible.
- Not Business As Usual—Renting a facility for an event or conference? Ask for recycling.

RECYCLING CONTAINERS AVAILABLE FOR EVENTS

Having a special event at your school, church, or club? Do it responsibly! Special event recycling containers for indoor or outdoor use are on loan at no cost through the Waukesha County Recycling Office, along with tips on successful recycling and waste collection at your event. Call 262-896-8317 early, during initial planning stages, to have a recycling specialist meet with organizers to help cut event waste and reduce costs.



The Waukesha County Freecycle Network continues to grow since it began last November with over 900 active members. Individuals, businesses and organizations can find homes for their unwanted, but usable goods... from chairs and desks to bicycles and skis.

The purpose of Freecycle is to prevent usable goods from ending up in the landfill, while also promoting a sense of community connection. There is no cost to join and all items posted on the board must be free. Anyone can join by visiting

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/waukeshacountyfreecycle.

Since its start, Waukesha County Freecycle has saved enough material to furnish a house from going into the landfill. Workbenches, a dollhouse, a doghouse, several appliances, a dining room table, a dryer and lots of exercise equipment have all been freecycled... along with many other items! Reusing these items rather than throwing them away means saving resources, energy, money and landfill space.

Freecycle is an international movement, with 25 networks in Wisconsin alone. It began in Tucson, AZ and the idea has caught on across the globe in the past year. Businesses, schools and non-profits are encouraged to get in on the fun. Freecycle is a great way to find free material for class projects, a home for your stack of three-ring binders or a much-needed lamp for the office.

Weaving a Web

www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling

A website is a place of change; information is updated and different programs come and go. The latest version of the Recycling & Solid Waste website can be seen below. A "Virtual Tour of the MRF" and a "Yard Waste/Composting" area are some of the newest additions to the site. If you are interested in finding out more about programs in the County and do not have Internet access, printed materials are available by calling (262) 896-8300.

Recycling & Solid Waste Featured Topics

- Be Smart Scholarship Opportunity
- County Green Schools Program
- * "MRF" Virtual Tour
- Special Computer Hardware Recycling Opportunity!
- Tip of the Month!
- Paint Options
- NEW!! Turn Over A New Leaf (Yard Waste Management)
- Program

 NEW!! Reuse-A-Shoe
 Program
- Contact Us
- Parks and Land Use







Waste Reduction

Yard Waste/

Composting





Upcoming Events





In-House Recycling







Quarter million tons & counting

Not to be outdone by a famous fast food chain, Waukesha County reached an important environmental milestone this year. The Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) reached the quarter million ton mark this spring – processing over 250,000 tons of recyclable materials collected from residents since 1991.

During this time there have been many changes in recycling, including more efficient processing and collection equipment, new and stronger markets for items such as magazines, unwanted mail, and plastics, and a shift in packaging from glass to lighter weight plastic. Public participation in recycling has remained strong.

Now it is time for a major shift in thinking about what we throw away. Waste is defined as "useless or discarded material". The concept of waste as a resource aligns nicely with DNR's vision of "moving toward zero waste". According to Sue Bangert, Bureau of Waste Management Director, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, "As we improve our waste management systems, we need to redefine waste and think more broadly about the means for going beyond recycling and remediation. We have made great strides in municipal recycling, converting 40% of what used to be considered waste into valuable resources for our manufacturers. We are making even bigger advancements with recycling and beneficial reuse in the industrial sector."

Join the Green Circle network of volunteers and help teach interested neighbors and friends about recycling, composting and waste reduction.

Materials, training and support provided for all volunteers.

Call 896-8327 to get in on the fun!

Garbage In – Garbage Out!

Would you want to pay for your neighbor's gas or electric bill? If not, you may be interested in a different system to pay for municipal garbage collection. Many cities and towns around the country are finding out first-hand about the benefits of Pay As You Throw (PAYT). Currently over 4000 municipalities in the U.S.

practice PAYT. This increasingly popular program treats garbage just like other utilities such as electric and water service. You pay for only the amount of service you use. PAYT has consistently resulted in a large decrease in waste generation and an increase in recycling.

With the existing system, a household that puts only one or two cans of trash at the curb per week pays the same amount as a household that puts out six or seven. This means that households who produce less trash are subsidizing those who are more wasteful. PAYT encourages residents to recycle as much as they can and to employ waste reduction strategies such as buying items with less packaging. A household that recycles, composts and reduces the amount of packaging purchased on shopping trips will end up with less garbage at the curb on trash day. That household will pay less for their garbage service than a household that doesn't recycle or reduce waste.

Residents in a PAYT community typically pay for their garbage in one of two ways. They either purchase bags for trash or buy stickers or tags to put on their existing cans. The only disposal cost is the number of bags or stickers needed to accommodate your trash. Less trash equals less cost. Recycling is free to users.

PAYT might be a perfect fit for your community. To learn more about this program, visit the county website at www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling. Waukesha County Recycling and Solid Waste staff can also answer questions about PAYT and assist communities in Waukesha County interested in piloting a PAYT program.

Recycle Raccoon's *Extreme* Make-over





<u>Before</u>

Afte

Recycle Raccoon, also known as "Double R" (or RR), has been the county recycling mascot for over fifteen years. He has attended hundreds of school presentations, MRF Open Houses, parades, festivals and other special events. RR was starting to feel (and look) a little tired. Like all of us, he needed some time off and a new look!

So, off he went to a raccoon spa (located deep in the woods at Retzer Nature Center) for some R&R and a complete makeover, including a new wardrobe! He's eager to show off his "new look"; so watch for RR at events around the county. If you would like to have RR attend an event at your school or in your community, just call the Recycling Office at 896-8300.

Coming Soon! "Double R" Trading Cards, with recycling and waste reduction facts, are available to visitors at the MRF (Material Recycling Facility) and at RR appearances. To make a reservation for a visit or tour, call 896-8300.

HEY, KIDS!

VISIT

WWW.WAUKESHACOUNTY.GOV/RECYCLING

AND LEARN HOW RR HELPS
TO REDUCE, REUSE
AND RECYCLE!

Newsletter published by:

Waukesha County
Department of Parks and Land Use
Recycling and Solid Waste Office
1320 Pewaukee Rd. Room #260
Waukesha, WI 53188
(262) 896-8300/Fax (262) 896-8298
www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling

Be Smart 2004-2005 Scholarship Competition

Waste reduction saves paper, and a lot more...

The Be SMART Coalition Invites High School and College Students

that reduce waste, prevent pollution or conserve resources at school, home, work, or in the community



NEW THIS YEAR - TWO CHANCES TO ENTER!

New FALL DEADLINE: DECEMBER 1 SPRING DEADLINE: APRIL 16

> Visit: www.besmart.org or call toll-free: 817-917-6278

BESMART





Recycling Questions and Answers





I've heard that recycled paper isn't as high •a quality as virgin paper. Is this true?

Today's recycled papers are virtually A • indistinguishable from their non-recycled counterparts in performance, color, and cost. They must be able to meet every specification required of other papers. In the early 80s, recycled paper was in the development phase, and did have problems with excess lint (paper dust) and more frequent copy machine jams. In 1998, the US EPA, Canon, Hewlett Packard, and Lexmark evaluated the performance of over 2 million sheets on a wide variety of copiers and printers. The study proved that virgin and recycled content paper performed equally. Another recent study discovered copier reps passed along negative information about recycled paper based upon experiences from the early 80s. For the best prices, use office suppliers that promote recycled content products. When ordering printing jobs, ask for recycled content paper. For more information, visit: www.moea.state.mn.us/lc/purchasing/copypaper.cfm

US ANNUAL PLASTIC BAG CONSUMPTION REQUIRES AN ESTIMATED 12,000,000 BARRELS OF OIL. (WALL STREET JOURNAL)

Why do some plastic grocery / shopping • bags say "recyclable", yet the county tells us not to put plastic bags in our recycling bin?

That's a good question. The plastics industry has A•brought us lightweight, durable bags, beverage/food containers and a host of other items we use daily; however, it has also brought a lot of confusion, especially when it comes to disposal.

Some plastic bags are labeled "recyclable" because they are – but only in very special circumstances. In order for a manufacturer to recycle plastic bags, they need lots and lots of clean bags in large bales. The county's MRF (Materials Recycling Facility) was not designed to handle that type of plastic – only the durable plastic bottles, jugs, and jars coded #1 and #2.

Even though there are zillions of bags available, they are very difficult to transport through a curbside pickup program. (You know how they like to blow around and attach themselves to trees, shrubs and fences.) Some manufacturers have found a way to remanufacture the bags into a usable material like lumber for decks. Therefore, a few retail stores have programs through which they will take back clean, plastic bags and bale them for shipping to one of these manufacturers.

The next time you are shopping, bring a reusable cloth bag with you. If you have to take a plastic one, ask the retailer if they have a collection program for the bags.

THE GOOD NEWS: Recycle bins for <u>clean</u> (no food contamination), dry plastic bags can be found inside the following retail stores in our area (check Customer Service if you don't spot them)

12.3 Jewel-Osco Stores

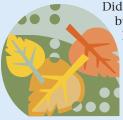
Most Kohl's Department Stores

№ Wal-Mart Stores

Protect The Planet, located at 525 Progress Avenue, in Waukesha, has a 55-gallon barrel for collection of clean, dry plastic (no food) bags. Protect The Planet is a division of the Waukesha Training Center, a notfor-profit agency that provides job training and employment opportunities to adults with disabilities.

EACH YEAR, AN ESTIMATED 500 BILLION TO I TRILLION PLASTIC BAGS ARE NOW CONSUMED WORLDWIDE. THAT COMES OUT TO OVER ONE MILLION PER MINUTE! WWW.REUSABLEBAGS.COM

Turn over a new leaf



Did you know that backyard burning creates air pollution, is a health hazard to people with asthma and other allergies, creates a fire hazard, and is a nuisance to neighbors? Urbanization also makes the old management practice of burning obsolete and wastes

resources. Using yard debris on-site saves municipal tax dollars for collection and processing besides reusing natural materials to beautify one's yard.

There are many ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle grass clippings, leaves, brush and branches, and organic kitchen scraps.

Composting is a natural recycling process that can be done at home with lawn and garden waste. Microorganisms from the soil interact with compost materials to help break down plant matter. Proper moisture, air, and temperature aid these microorganisms in their work. Finished compost is used as an organic plant food and soil amendment.

Grasscycling is leaving grass clippings on the lawn to decompose. Grass clippings are mostly water. When you mow regularly, clippings quickly decompose and release nutrients to fertilize the lawn. Research shows that when grass clippings are left on the lawn, one-third less fertilizer is needed to achieve the same color and grass density found on lawns where the clippings are removed.

Mulching Leaves In Place Leaves are rich in carbon, phosphorus, and potassium - all essential nutrients needed by plants, including turf grasses. Simply mow leaves along with the grass during fall, and let the small leaf pieces filter down among the grass blades. Three to four passes may be required to chop leaves fine enough so that they filter through the turf and expose grass blades to sunlight.

Mulching Mulches help soil retain moisture, moderate temperature fluctuations, and reduce erosion and soil compaction. Yard wastes such as grass clippings, leaves, and chipped or shredded brush and branches can be used as organic mulches. Organic mulches are usually applied three inches deep over the soil and around plants to achieve the benefits of mulching.

Vermicomposting Red worms live in the upper layer of the forest floor. These worms can turn food waste into nutrient-rich humus for gardens and houseplants. A mere tablespoon of worm castings provides enough organic plant nutrients to feed an eight-inch potted plant for over two months. Use a worm composting bin or vermicomposting bin to make a valuable soil amendment out of things like: old newspapers, vegetable food scraps, trimmings from house plants and other organic materials that would normally be thrown away.

Alternative landscaping If you have a big yard and don't use it for activities, consider planting an area of prairie grasses, native shrubs, or trees. Using native plant species reduces the need for watering, mowing, and pesticide use. It could also mean a beautiful yard that attracts more birds and butterflies by providing shelter and natural food.

For more information on how you can use the above ideas to turn over a new leaf, see the Recycling and Solid Waste website at www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling

Waste Product to Resource

Yard Wastes Help Reclaim Gravel Pit

Composting is the key to a unique partnership underway between Waukesha County and many local communities. Lawn and garden wastes collected by communities are being composted on county property in the Town of Genesee, where an active gravel pit also exists. The final compost will be used as a topsoil substitute to help reclaim about 70 acres of mined land over the next 10 years. Future plans call for an industrial park on this site.



Johnson Sand & Gravel of New Berlin has been contracted to complete the project, with the assistance of S & R Composting Services, based in Genesee. "It is a great demonstration of turning a waste product into a resource while saving landfill space, reducing local property taxes and reclaiming the land for future use", says Perry Lindquist, Land Resources Manager for Waukesha County, who is overseeing the project.

Recycling Construction & Demolition Materials at Retzer Nature Center



Glass doors and side panels went to an area glass artist who will use them to make countertops.

The Waukesha County Recycling & Solid Waste Office contracted with WasteCap Wisconsin, Inc. to provide technical assistance, educational assistance, monitor, measure, and document results of the recycling and re-use of construction materials during the expansion of the nature center.

According to Jenna Kunde, Executive Director of WasteCap, "Many of the projects we have worked on around the state have recycled well over 50% of the construction debris, saving the contractor thousands of dollars in landfill disposal fees. Once everyone understands the goal, it's not difficult to train workers to separate out these key materials."

The list of building materials being targeted for re-use and recycling at Retzer includes: Concrete from walkways and columns, window and door glass, cedar roofing shingles, corrugated cardboard, drywall, scrap metal, wood, and cans and bottles.

"We have had excellent cooperation from the general contractor, Creative Constructors, who had done some recycling on other construction sites," said Linda Wainstock, County Recycling Specialist.

Visit www.wastecapwi.org for more examples of recycling at construction sites.

GOT MAGAZINES?

Magazines and catalogs are recyclable and very much in demand by paper companies!



They'll soon be on their way to becoming new paper in another publication - and you'll have cleared some clutter in your favorite reading spot!

FREE Programs

The Waukesha County Recycling and Solid Waste office offers several fun, free programs for a variety of ages, from school and scout groups to community organizations. Call 896-8300 for more information or to sign up for any of the following presentations:

• Visit to the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) - all ages

Talk to the Wise Tree of Recycling, assemble the history of trash puzzle and learn what happens to your recyclables after they leave the curb.

• Tour of the MRF -adults and students in sixth grade and above

Take a guided walk through the plant to see how sorting is done, as well as how materials are baled and prepared for shipping.

• Household Hazardous Waste Presentation -4th through 12th grade

This lively, interactive classroom program will identify environmental and health issues associated with everyday household products.

• Composting Workshops - all ages

Composting. What is it? Does it smell? We can teach your school, church or neighborhood how to reap a heap of benefits from nature's way of recycling.

• Recycling and Waste Reduction Presentation - all ages

From a power point presentation to a "hands on" approach for kids, we have programs to fit all types of groups.

• Appearance of "Recycle Raccoon", the county's recycling mascot - all ages A great addition for fairs, festivals and parades!

• Sustainable Living Workshops - high school, college and adults

The newest addition to our education program, this workshop will introduce lifestyle habits and products that create, in the words of Buckminster Fuller, "a world that works for all".

Textile Recycling Opportunities

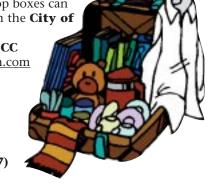
Americans recover less than 14% of clothing and bed linens, leaving 86% to be thrown away. While many people already donate usable clothing and household goods to non-profit groups or charities, Waukesha County residents now have an additional opportunity to recycle their used textiles.

A company called US'Again will accept textiles that are often landfilled, including clothing that is no longer fit for wear, old bedding, pillows, towels, rags, and shoes. Red drop boxes can be found at locations around the county, including municipal drop off sites in the City of Waukesha, New Berlin, and Oconomowoc. A number of gas stations in Menomonee Falls, Waukesha, and Oconomowoc, and the Genesee UCC

Church also have collection boxes. For more information, visit: www.usagain.com Organizations that accept <u>usable</u> clothing include:

Goodwill Industries-1400 Nike Dr. Waukesha 262-547-5023 St. Vincent de Paul-305 E. Main St. Waukesha 262-547-3281 Salvation Army-313 Bank Street, Waukesha 262-547-2422 Those that offer home pick-up include:

Purple Heart (1-888-414-4483) and Vietnam Vets (1-800-775-8387)





Celebrate America Recycles Day Family Open House

Waukesha County Materials Recycling Facility 220 S. Prairie Avenue, Waukesha

Saturday, November 13, 2004 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- → All ages are welcome to tour the facility and see where your recyclables go after they leave the curb
- **⇒** See new products made of recycled materials **→** Test your recycling knowledge at The Wise Tree of Recycling •

History of Trash Puzzle • Mural Timeline

DIRECTIONS: Prairie Avenue runs north/south between West St. Paul and Sunset. The MRF is south of the intersection of College Avenue & Prairie, across the street from the Saratoga Ball Fields.

ALUMINUM: A Recycling Superstar

Briggs and Stratton uses it, and so does Harley Davidson. It can be recycled forever without deterioration in quality or value. This fact alone is enough to qualify recycled aluminum to be at the top of the charts, but the energy facts are equally amazing: It takes the same amount of energy to make one new aluminum soft drink can as it takes to make four cans from recycled aluminum. Recycling just one can saves enough energy to run a laptop computer for four hours. Americans, who throw away enough aluminum every three months to rebuild our entire commercial air fleet. could play a big role in the US energy picture through the simple act of recycling!

Department of Parks and Land Use Office of Recycling and Solid Waste 1320 Pewaukee Road, Waukesha, WI 53188 Fall 2004

Recycling Impact

You have a positive impact when you recycle- by reducing the trash put into landfills, as well as saving resources and reducing pollutants released into the environment. The 24,000 tons processed at the county recycling facility in 2003 represent the following savings in energy and natural resources:

180,216 fewer trees were used to manufacture paper

Air pollution emissions were reduced by 26,609 tons

Water pollutants were reduced by 99 tons

Enough energy was saved to service 2,548 **households** for one year

For other ways to reduce your impact on the environment, save resources and money visit the Wisconsin Be SMART Website at www.besmart.org and click on the America Recycles Day pledge. It all comes back to you.



www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling



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♦ Saving Money ♦ Conserving Resources

♦ Building Community

♦ Protecting the Environment

